DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 085 524 CE 000 701

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TITLE Career Education: An Alliance with Private Vocational Schools.
PUB DATE [72]
NOTE 12p.; Paper presented at the Annual Conference of the National Association of Trade and Technical Schools (8th, Washington, D.C. June 15, 1972)

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.65 HC-$3.29
DESCRIPTORS Accreditation (Institutions); *Career Education; Private Schools; *Speeches; State Government; *Trade and Industrial Education; Vocational Education; *Vocational Schools
IDENTIFIERS *Private Vocational Schools

ABSTRACT

The importance of private trade, technical, and other specialized occupational schools in meeting the needs of an increasingly technological society is reviewed. The developments of career education emphasized by Office of Education activities are explained. Advantages that proprietary vocational schools have over public ones are described. New FTC regulations for private vocational and home study courses will strengthen their reputations by combatting misrepresentations. A viable alliance between these schools and the Federal government must be implemented. Accreditation is important in upgrading educational standards. Legislation which has importance for private vocational schools is reviewed. (MS)

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# CAREER EDUCATION: AN ALLIANCE WITH PRIVATE VOCATIONAL SCHOOLS

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CE 000 701

*Keynote address before the Eighth Annual Conference of the National Association of Trade and Technical Schools, Washington, D.C. Thursday, June 15, 1972

President Larson and distinguished guests, I am grateful for the privilege of participating in the 8th Annual Conference of the National Association of Trade and Technical Schools. In the few short years since NATTS has been organized, it has provided leadership and centralized representation for its member institutions. These institutions have contributed much to this nation's post-secondary and adult career occupational education, and they give promise of continuing to provide the specialized and exemplary programs necessary to meet the needs of our increasingly technological society.

I note with special interest the session on tommorow's agenda in which you plan to honor State Officials who deal directly with private schools and the sessions on "Working With State Governments" and "The Interaction of Private and Public Education." The pragmatism which has contributed so greatly to the excellence and success of your institutions is clearly evident. For it is at the State and local levels that the details of the cooperation and support, as visualized in the Vocational Education Act of 1963 as amended in 1968, will be realized. I refer to the contracting with private schools by States for educational services, and a similar utilization of the excellence and availability of private institutions under the Manpower Development and Training Act.

The excellent quality of education offered in non-public and private trade, technical, and other specialized occupational schools is well known to employers and is an important and integral part of the total career education capability of the Nation. It is available

to prepare full-time students for technical and specialized occupations and to upgrade and update education for adults whether they are already employed or are seeking employment. In a true sense this part of the career education concept, in which we are all so deeply involved, is among those parts which already are in place and functioning.

Let me share with you now some of the concepts and developments concerning this career education movement.

As many of you are aware, Career Education is now the principal thrust of the U.S. Office of Education. Its fundamental concept is that educational experiences, curriculum, instruction, and counseling should be geared to preparation for economic independence, an appreciation for the dignity of work, and development of the full man. Its main purpose is to prepare all students for a successful and rewarding life by improving the basis for occupational skills, enhancing educational achievement by making education more meaningful and more relevant to the aspirations of students, and by increasing the real choices and alternatives people have among the many occupations and training avenues to them. It is a lifelong, systematic way of acquainting students with the world of work in the elementary and junior high years and preparing them in high school and college to enter and advance in a career field of their own choosing.

For adults it is a way to re-enter formal education and upgrade their skills in their established career field or to enter a new career field. It embraces all occupations and professions and can include any individuals whether in or out of school.

The Office of Education is involved in a number of exciting ways in furthering the career education movement. Last month we created in the Bureau of Adult, Vocational and Technical Education a Curriculum Center for Occupational and Adult Education. The Center already is handling 39 projects. One project alone called for reviewing 32 proposals for developing the capabilities of State Curriculum Laboratories in reorienting them towards career education.

Recently, through a grant to the Texas State Education Agency, the Center was able to announce that seven bibliographies of State Curriculum materials in seven major vocational areas are now available through ERIC.

Our emphasis on Career Education is primarily based on the growth of technology in this country and its effects on the lives of the American people. For too long our educational system has assumed that all our youth must be channelled into colleges and universities when in fact fewer than 20% have in the past graduated with bachelor's degree into professional and managerial leadership jobs. In addition the Bureau of Labor Statistics indicates that in the foreseeable future 83% of all jobs will not require bachelor's degree preparation.

Each year then it becomes more evident that the largest increase in job opportunities will continue to be for persons skilled as technical, clerical, or paraprofessional workers. These people are needed to support the professionals and guide the efforts of the skilled and semi-skilled persons at the technical and specialist

level in all major fields of work. The education and work experience required to prepare such specialized supportive people has to be based not only on high school preparation but also on technical education beyond high school. And this type of training has traditionally been provided in large measure by the Nation's nearly 10,000 proprietary vocational schools.

Several special advantages over the public schools are offered by proprietary vocational schools and these include:

- the ability to respond quickly to changes in the manpower needs of local business and industry-courses can be added as soon as they can be organized without months of red tape and procedural delays inherent within the public school system.
- the ability to concentrate on the needs of each student-marginal students who have never before experienced academic success can proceed at their own pace and successfully completed courses which are aimed at developing practical techniques rather than theoretical knowledge; faculty members are chosen for the most part on the basis of their practical experience and consequently act as excellent teachers for such training; and innoative teaching techniques such as the use of short, sequential learning units and small teacher to student ratios are utilized.
- special introductory courses have been set up in many schools to help educationally disadvantaged students meet entrance standards.

- courses are of shorter duration, enabling students to complete their training and begin working sooner. Thus providing an opportunity for the poor students who don't have the time and money necessary for a four year college program.
- proprietary schools are more flexible in that they offer both day and evening classes and operate on a year-round, rather than a nine-month, basis with classes starting an average of 4 times a year.
- and, proprietary institutions have incorporated such programs as loans, installment payments for tuition fees, and work placement in nearby industry and business to help disadvantaged students.

In spite of these significant advantages, proprietary schools have frequently been met with a less than enthusiastic response from educators, school counselors, and, to some extent, Federal government officials.

Some of the negativism has been provoked by the few schools which give all the others a bad name by not providing what is promised by their catalogue or their school representatives or by probiding insignificant training or job placement. To combat this, the Federal Trade Commission has just published new regulations for private vocational and home study courses designed to eliminate misrepresentation of the schools' nature and efficacy in advertising for enrollments. These guidelines become effective on August 14, 1972, but schools will be allowed until November 2 to reprint their catalogues. The guidelines are administrative

interpretations of the FTC Act, and the Commission intends to initiate action against industry members that fail to comply. This could lead to "more stringent contraints or requirements than those" issued. Last month the FTC charged three computer schools with misleading advertising and promised more action. Despite these abuses, however, the fact that so many private vocational schools exist and prosper financially indicates that one cannot get the type of training they provide elsewhere or that they have superior resources and teaching techniques, or both.

According to A. H. Belitsky, on the Upjohn Institute for Employment Research, private vocational schools will remain viable then principally because:

- the public schools alone cannot presently meet the needs of all the people who want vocational training, and if the public institutions were to be expanded, the costs of adding new vocational programs and the possible social waste of unutilized or underutilized private facilities would be prohibitive.
- unique course offerings such as diamond setting, dog grooming, meat cutting, and time-study engineering (to name a few) could be provided in public schools only at high costs; and vocational courses of short duration would be hard to integrate into the public school curriculum.
- private vocational schools have an advantage of early experimentation with new programs and instruction methods which will continue because of their close ties with industry and their desire to maximize profits.

This at a moment when resources are scarce and time is short, it is urgent that a viable alliance between the U.S. Office of Education and organizations such as NATTS be developed and strengthened to further the concept of career education.

There are some problems which cannot be overcome except by our joint efforts. For example, at present all trade and technical schools are operating at only about two thirds capacity at a time when we need to maximize our potential vocational resources to meet the challenges of Career Education. If these schools were encouraged to operate at full capacity, an additional one half to two thirds million more people could be accomodated.

Another problem is that most guidance counselors must be encouraged to make known to their charges in the high schools the opportunities which are available in the private vocational schools. The vocational schools themselves need additional guidance counseling within their own institutions as well.

A third problem is the fact that the vast majority of private vocational schools are not accredited or associated with a national organization such as NATTS or even eligible for accreditation. Accreditation is extremely important because:

-- it provides the schools with an objective method of upgrading their educational standards and practices thereby improving the reputation and opportunities of all effective schools.

-- it provides prospective students, teachers, counselors, and lending institutions with an objective assessment of the quality of the programs provided by these institutions.

-- it focuses public attention on competent schools and enhances their competitive status with prospective counselors, students, and and teachers.

-- and it forces other schools which are not yet accredited to raise their standards in order to compete with those schools which are accredited.

A fourth major problem is the high cost of tuition at private vocational schools and the problem of securing loans for the students, I mention this only in passing since I am sure that David Bayer will address himself to this problem in his talk after lunch.

In both the Vocational Education and Manpower Development Training Acts, Congress recognized that the excellence of private institutions should be made available to those who might thus profit from them with support of Federal funds through the contract mechanism.

Under the Vocational Education Act, contracts for specialized educational services may be let by the State provided that there are no State laws prohibiting such contracting.

The provisions of the MDTA have fostered more cooperation between non-public and private schools and State Administrators of the Act since 1963 when only about 2 percent of the total number of trainees under the Manpower Development and Training Act attended non-public institutions, the number has increased steadily. In 1971, sixteen percent attended such institutions. There have been many placements in recent years through individual referrals to private trade, technical, and

otherwise specialized schools. We beleive this to be clear evidence of the willingness of the States to incorporate the excellent and specialized programs of the private vocational schools into the total delivery system of high quality education in the United States.

We are now making a complete assessment of all aspects of the now pending legislation contained in Senate Bill 659, "The Education Amendments of 1972," as they apply to occupational education. The "Amendments," passed by both the chambers, are now awaiting the President's signature. This is the first piece of educational legislation which clearly stipulates that the United States has a responsibility to provide some form of post-secondary education to all students. It provides for the first time a mechanism by which all post-secondary, non-professional occupational education programs can be planned, coordinated and administered within each of the separate States according to its peculiar and specific needs.

Some provisions under Title X, "Community Colleges and Occupational Education," are of particular interest to NATTS members. Section 1057 (b) "Program Grants for State Occupational Programs" reads as follows:

> "Programs authorized by this part may be carried out through contractual arrangements with <u>private organizations and institution organized for profit</u> where such arrangements can make a contribution to achieving the purposes of this part by providing substantially equivalent education, training, or

services more readily or more economically, or by needless duplication of expensive physical plant and equipment, or by providing needed education or training of the types authorized by this part which would not otherwise be available."

In Section 1202 (a), "State Post-secondary Education Commissions" you will want to note the role of private institutions. It provides that: "Any State which desires to receive assistance under section 1203 or Title X shall establish a State Commission or designate an existing State agency or State Commission (to be known as the State Commission) which is broadly and equitably representative of the general public and public and private non-profit and proprietary institutions of post-secondary education in the State including community colleges (as defined in Title X), junior colleges, post-secondary vocational schools, area vocational schools, technical institutes, four-year institutions of higher education and branches thereof."

Section 1203, alluded to, in Section 1202 (a) states in part: "The Commissioner (U.S. Commissioner of Education) is authorized to make grants to any State Commissioner established pursuant to Section 1202...to enable it to expand the scope of the studies and planning required in Title X through comprehensive inventories of, and studies with respect to, all public and private post-secondary educational resources in the State, including planning necessary for such resources to better coordinated, improved, expanded, or altered so that all persons within the State who desire, and who can benefit from, post-secondary education may have an opportunity to do so."

Another section of this Act, which is one of the most important educational acts in our nation's history, appears in Section 404 of Title III. It creates an Assistant Secretary of Education who, under certain conditions, may make grants to, and contracts with, public and private educational institutions and agencies to improve post-secondary educational opportunities by providing them assistance for the design and introduction of cost-effective methods of instruction and operation.

It has been an honor and a pleasure to appear before this Eighth Annual Conference of the National Association of Trade and Technical Schools. In closing, I want to assure you that we in the U.S. Office of Education look forward to continuing and strengthening our close relationships with your representatives at the National level, particularly in view of the scope of the new educational legislation which looms on the horizon. For in the future, with the help of organizations like NATTS, private vocational schools will undoubtedly experience a consistent growth in enrollment and greater public acceptance as training resource for persons who want to develop a marketable skill. The importance of their greater role can not be underestimated if we are to successfully pursue the concept of Career Education.